

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached is a replacement drawing sheet including Fig. 7 which should replace the original drawing sheet including Fig. 7. Fig. 7 in the replacement drawing sheet has been amended to include the label "Prior Art."

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Applicants have amended claim 1. Accordingly, claims 1-9 remain pending for consideration.

Examiner Huh is kindly thanked for indicating that claims 3-5 and 7 are allowed.

Table 2 of the Specification stands objected to because it states "Inventive Examples." Table 2 has been replaced with the same table but with "Inventive Examples" replaced by -- Comparative examples--. Additionally, Figure 7 of the drawings, the Abstract and Title have been amended to address the objections set forth in the Office Action. A replacement sheet for Fig. 7 is enclosed herewith. Withdrawal of the objections is earnestly solicited.

Art Rejections

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Gordon (US 5064411) and Kaneko (US 6517523).

Injection needle embodiments of the invention have a single needle point which is not present on the central plane of the needle tube. For example, referring to the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 3 of the drawings, the point 5 is offset from the central plane (i.e., the plane containing axis 6 and extending perpendicular to the plane of the facet 3a).

When injection needle 1 pierces the skin, the needle 1 first contacts the skin 7 not by way of point-to-point contact between the skin 7 and the sharp needle point 5, but by way of a more linear contact between the skin 7 and a needle region including

the needle point 5 and a portion of the curved edge 4b or 4c projecting toward the distal end of the edge surface 3 (a contact portion has a linear shape). Accordingly, when the distal end of the edge surface 3 contacts the skin 7 and the edge surface 3 is further forced into the skin 7, forces that are applied from the edge surface 3 to the skin 7 are distributed. As a result, the puncture pain caused when the injection needle 1 penetrates the skin 7 can be reduced. See line 16 of page 11 to line 16 of page 12 of Applicants' specification.

Gordon discloses a needle 10 that has two points 18 at the end, which are intended to provide protection from inadvertent puncture of the skin by the person handling the needle. See Fig. 2. The two points 18 are symmetrical with respect to the central line of the need tip 17. When the needle 10 of Fig. 2 pierces the skin, the two sharp points 18 first make point-to-point contact with the skin, often causing sharp pain. The puncture pain is sustained until the beveled surface 15 goes fully through the skin.

Keneko's disclosure describes a needle that is intended to reduce puncture pain by way of modifying slant surfaces on the needle tip. According to this disclosure, if the angle of the slant surface is reduced the resistance force will be reduced and thus the puncture pain alleviated. See e.g., col. 4, lines 28-44.

Claim 1 as amended recites " the needle point is not present on said central plane and said needle point is the only needle point." One example of the insertion needle of claim 1 is the needle 1 described above and disclosed in Applicants' specification. By this design there is a reduction in puncture pain over needle points that are located on the central plane. Gordon, in contrast, discloses two needle points while Keneko's needle is located on the central plane. Thus, for at least this

reason, claim 1 would not have been obvious over Gordon taken with Keneko. Additionally, because Gordon's needle requires two sharp points in order to function as intended, it would not have been obvious to remove one of the points 18 in Gordon because such a modification would have been contrary to the objective sought to be achieved by Gordon. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn and claim 1 allowed.

Claims 2 and 6, dependant from allowable claim 1, recite additional features that further distinguish Applicants' invention over the art. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 2 and 6 be withdrawn and these claims allowed.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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